

## The Seed Library Movement

Seed libraries allow people to "borrow" seeds to grow, typically with the understanding that, if possible, some seeds will be saved from their harvest & returned to the library to replenish the stock. Often seed libraries are housed in public libraries, but not always.

Seed libraries help support **seed sovereignty**, which is the idea that all people should be free to save, share, & breed seeds, as well as participate in shaping policies & laws that govern seed, which have become increasingly restrictive. Learn more about seed sovereignty & the Open Source Seed Initiative, which "was created by a group of plant breeders, farmers, seed companies, and sustainability advocates who want to free the seed!"

<https://osseeds.org/about/about/>

The seed library movement is growing rapidly. There are now hundreds in the U.S., & over 40 in Michigan, 30 of which have opened since 2016!

To learn more about seed libraries & see a map of all of the locations in MI, visit <https://misedlibrary.org/>



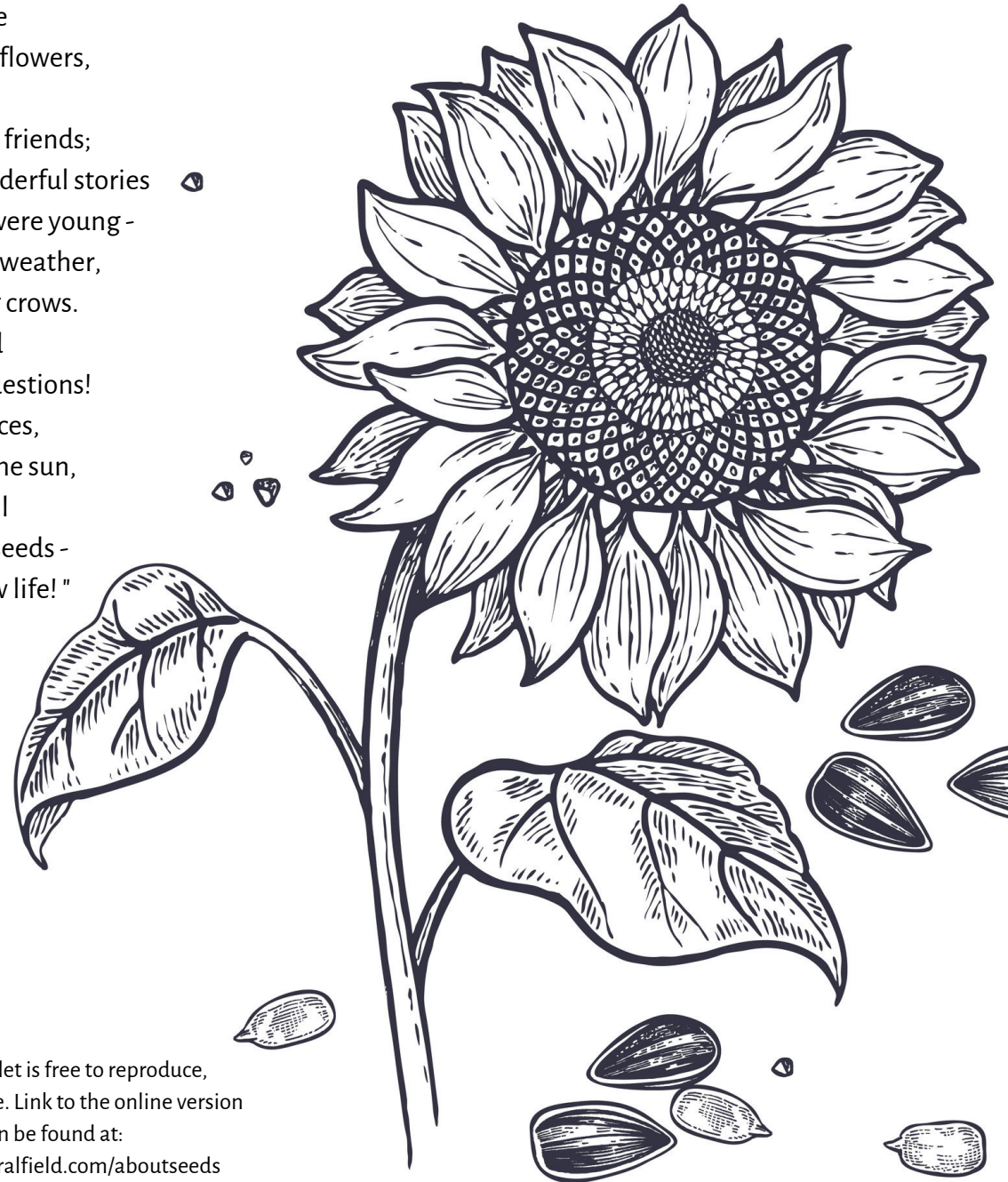
## From "The Sunflowers"

by Mary Oliver

"Come with me  
to visit the sunflowers,  
they are shy  
but want to be friends;  
they have wonderful stories  
of when they were young -  
the important weather,  
the wandering crows.  
Don't be afraid  
to ask them questions!  
Their bright faces,  
which follow the sun,  
will listen, & all  
those rows of seeds -  
each one a new life!"

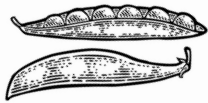
## ON SEEDS

## & SEED SAVING



This pamphlet is free to reproduce,  
edit & distribute. Link to the online version  
can be found at:  
<https://theferalfield.com/aboutseeds>  
Contact Danielle at [brugnon2@msu.edu](mailto:brugnon2@msu.edu)  
with questions.

## Surprising Seed History & Facts



Even into the early 1900's, there were not many seed companies. Most farmers and gardeners used seed they saved themselves. The U.S. government also used to distribute seeds for free, & in 1897 sent out over 1.1 billion seed packets to farmers and gardeners across the country to encourage people to grow food!

**Learn more** about the history of the seed industry:  
<https://seedstory.wordpress.com/a-brief-history-of-the-seed-industry/>

Fast forward, & now, just 4 companies account for over 60% of seed sales globally: Bayer (which recently acquired Monsanto), BASF, which owns seed companies purchased from Bayer, Corteva (formed when Dow & DuPont merged), & Chemchine, which recently purchased Syngenta.

**Learn more:**  
<https://philhoward.net/2018/12/31/global-seed-industry-changes-since-2013/>

It is estimated that we have lost between 75 & 95 percent of our vegetable seed varieties in just the past 100 years.

**Learn more:** Watch  
<https://www.seedthemovie.com/trailer>

## YOU CAN HELP!

**Plant seeds. Save seeds.**

**Share seeds. Buy local seeds.**

**Support your local seed library!**

If you are just learning how to save seeds, start with what's easy!

- basil
- beans
- chard
- eggplant
- flowers like cosmos & zinnias
- lettuce
- peas
- peppers
- spinach
- sunflowers
- tomatoes



In addition to the books which can be found at your local library, there are lots of great, free seed-saving & gardening resources online with detailed instructions about how to save each kind of seed & much more!

**Complete seed-saving handbook, free to download & print:**  
<http://www.howtosaveseeds.com/index.php>

**Helpful information about all aspects of gardening, including seed starting & seed saving:** <https://www.seedsavers.org/learn>

## Basic Seed-Saving Tips

Always save seeds from the healthiest plants. Label with the date of collection, variety, & any other important info. Make sure to store seeds in a cool, dry place. Some seeds can be frozen to increase longevity.

**Learn more:**  
<http://www.howtosaveseeds.com/store.php>



### How to Save Beans

Remove green pods, leaving just a couple to dry on each plant. Protect from rain if possible. Once pods are fully dry, remove from the plant & discard any that show signs of mildew or disease.

Remove beans from their pods & spread out to finish drying. This can take a few weeks. When dry, store in a cool place with low humidity. Save your glass jars with lids—they're great for storing beans & other seeds.

**Discover** delicious, unique bean varieties & learn about other endangered foods:  
<https://www.slowfoodusa.org/ark-of-taste>